

Northern Meat Breeders Cooperative Plan

Location of Project: Enosburg Falls, Vermont (Northeast Region)

Purpose: The Pride of Vermont Farms is a cooperative of goat producers that attempted to use kid meat for making sausages. The reason for pursuing this strategy was that there were no markets for kid meat in the State, and that by putting it into sausages, consumers might be more willing to eat kid meat.

Accomplishments: With the assistance of the Vermont Fresh Network, connections were established with farmers markets and buyers' cooperatives, where sausage sales were well received. Taste sampling demonstrations were offered at different locations, as an extension to educational outreach activities, to give consumers the opportunity to sample different types of sausages, and educate them on how the sausages were made. Nevertheless, the sausage was a slow seller among restaurant customers, which caused the cooperative to switch to selling cuts of lamb during the month of August.

Lessons Learned: The cooperative found that it was too cost prohibitive to process kid meat for sausages, which led them to focus solely on selling lamb cuts. Accentuating the difficulty of the project was the fact that the cooperative had difficulty calculating their true product yields from slaughter, and the quotes they received from processors tended to underestimate actual processing costs.

Conclusion: While making sausages from kid meat in the upper New England area was a unique project, there did not appear to be enough demand to make the product profitable. Although the popularity of the sausage product was reasonably strong at local farmers markets, local area restaurants did not provide the same level of support.